

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are currently pending in the application. Claim 3 is hereby cancelled.

Claims 1 and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 USC §112 as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. The objected to language in claim 1 has been amended to overcome this rejection.

Claims 1 and 2 stand rejected under 35 USC §102 as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,817,263 (Taylor). Claims 4-14 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as obvious over Taylor.

Entry of the amendment and reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-14 are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney wishes to thank Examiner Lee for the courtesies extended him at the interview on September 8, 2004. During the interview, independent claims 1 and 2 were discussed.

Claim 2, as presented herein, is rewritten in independent form, and further incorporates the limitations of claim 3. More specifically, claim 3 characterizes the connecting part as comprising an inner surface with a complete or partial groove or tongue which the compacted molded piece engages and/or partially encloses, respectively. An exemplary tongue is shown as element 5 in Fig. 1.

The groove/tongue configuration, aside from the structural improvements it affords, inherently reduces "wall effects". That is, in the absence of the groove/tongue, it is possible that a certain amount of air to be filtered will migrate between the connecting part

and the filter material. As a result, this air is essentially unfiltered. By reason of using either the groove or tongue, air traveling along the wall is caused to be diverted away from the wall at the tongue or groove to force that air through the filter material.

Taylor teaches only a sleeve with an inner surface for filter material that has no tongues or grooves as claimed. Taylor's disclosure would not motivate one skilled in the art to modify the sleeve disclosed therein to arrive at the claimed structure.

Additionally, the apparatus in claim 2 is a structural part specifically designed to be connected as a unit to a respirator or fan filter unit. Taylor discloses only a simple sleeve which is not a corresponding structural element.

Claim 4, which depends from claim 2, specifically characterizes the connecting part as comprising a periphery with fasteners for detachable gastight connection to a respirator or fan filter unit, or for a gastight connection to an adaptor for connection to a respirator or fan filter unit. During the interview, the Examiner acknowledged that Taylor does not teach or suggest any corresponding fasteners.

Accordingly, claims 2 and 4 are believed allowable, as are claims 5-7, which depend cognately from claim 2 and recite further significant structural detail to further distinguish over the cited art.

Claim 1 has been amended to parallel a method, recited therein, with the apparatus of claim 2. Accordingly, no new issues are raised that would require further consideration or search.

Claims 8-14 depend cognately from Claim 1 and recite further significant method steps to further distinguish over the cited art.

Entry of the amendment, reconsideration of the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-14,
and allowance of the case are requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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